

DRAFT

2004 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

City Bonding Priorities

The bonding priorities for the City of Minneapolis are as follows:

1. Minnesota Planetarium and Space Discovery Center: \$24 million to design, construct, furnish and equip the planetarium.
2. Heritage Park: \$9.625 million to construct public infrastructure improvements and enhancement of public amenities.
3. University Research Corridor, in cooperation with the University of Minnesota: \$9 million for design and construction of the primary stormwater management pond in SEMI.
4. Minnesota Shubert Performing Arts and Education Center: \$10 million to construct, furnish and equip.

Local Government Finance

Delivering essential services, correcting deficiencies caused by past budget decisions and limiting property tax increases are the Minneapolis' budget strategy goals. The Local Government Aid (LGA) reductions in 2003 and 2004 (\$26 million and \$35 million respectively) have resulted in severe reductions in essential services, including public safety and road construction, and have widened the disparity in tax rates between Minneapolis and surrounding communities. The cuts to the LGA program enacted by the 2003 legislature were greater than those cuts to other parts of the State budget and amount to a utilization of the property tax to mask the "no tax increase" rhetoric at the state level.

The 2001 property tax reform act resulted in a dramatic shift of the total property tax burden from non-residential properties to the residential sector. This shift will continue over the next five years because of the scheduled phase-out of the limited market value program.

Minneapolis supports:

- LGA or similar programs that serve as a major part of municipal financing.
- Full funding for the current LGA program.
- Altering of how the concept of sales ratios is applied to the LGA formula so that state mandated exclusions from market value (such as limited market value) are not included.
- Diversifying revenue sources for municipalities.
- Suspending the phase-out of the limited market value program for residential properties.
- Re-authorizing the "This Old House" program

Minneapolis opposes:

- Further cuts to state aids.
- Cuts to state aids that would shift tax increases from state tax sources to property tax sources.

- Levy limits.
- Reverse referendum proposals.

Affordable Housing

In Minneapolis, providing all residents with safe, decent and affordable housing is a citywide priority. With another state budget deficit looming on the horizon, significant attention must be given to safeguarding current MHFA programs that serve low-income residents in our City. Times of economic distress demand that we increase public support for housing, rather than further deplete these scarce resources.

Minneapolis supports:

- Support for legislation that authorizes creation of TIF mixed-use and mixed-income housing districts for developments that contain both owner-occupied and rental units.
- Supporting the conveyance of tax forfeit property in targeted neighborhoods to the cities having jurisdiction over these properties for free when the proposed end use is affordable housing.
- Predatory lending: A state-wide approach to curtailing abuses.
- Support state bonding for MHFA at a level significant to have statewide impact in the area of permanent assisted housing and to serve other affordable housing needs in the state.
- Support efforts to reinstate reductions in one-time funds in the Emergency Shelter and Transitional Housing Programs; reinstate statewide Emergency Assistance program, funding and criteria; and restore funding to homeless youth programs that were part of funding reductions and block granting to the counties.

Transportation

Both Minneapolis and metropolitan communities benefit from a strong public transit system. Bus and Light Rail Transit (LRT) ensures mobility to jobs throughout the region and promotes downtown growth. Public transportation helps sustain a healthy environment and economy, and, with careful planning, can increase neighborhood livability. Minneapolis strongly believes that all transportation improvements must be done in a manner that is compatible with neighborhood livability.

Minneapolis supports:

- Legislation creating alternative sources of revenues for transportation improvements. These could include:
 - Authority to create and utilize a transportation utility
 - Authority for more extensive use of special assessments
- The creation of a statewide task force to put forth a state airport strategy that incorporates the interests of the entire state, including citizens, the business community, the metropolitan area and outstate regions. This task force should give priority to examination of air cargo requirements and demands
- Legislation that increases funding for transportation and transit.
- Dedicated funding for transit.

- Funding for the Northstar Commuter Rail Corridor.
- Funding for the Northwest Busway

Minneapolis opposes:

- Legislation that negatively impacts LRT or treats LRT differently from other regional transportation projects.
- Legislation that further restricts a city's approval process of state highway designs within its jurisdiction.
- Extra lanes on 35W north of the Crosstown unless the lanes are dedicated to bus rapid transit

Public Safety

Public safety concerns are issues that the City of Minneapolis takes seriously. Providing public safety to residents is one of the highest responsibilities of government.

Priority Issues for Minneapolis are:

- Sustaining the City's authority to establish and operate an administrative process to address violations of municipal ordinances.
- Including "palm" and "writer's edge of hand" prints to be taken of juveniles in custody.
- Restore funding for the CriMNet statewide information system.
- Chronic Offenders/Enhancement of Crimes:
 - Changes to the criminal code to address chronic offenders in the areas of indecent exposure and interference with privacy.
 - Adding murder in the first, second and third degree along with manslaughter in the first and second degree to the list of qualified domestic violence related offenses.
 - Streamlining of the statutes used to more effectively prosecute prostitution-related offenses.
 - Making possession of any amount of marijuana with intent to sell a misdemeanor.
 - Legislation that makes it a crime to drive while under the influence of any drug that makes a person an unsafe driver.
 - Legislation that includes metabolites and derivatives in Minnesota's "per se" controlled substance law.
- Restoring funding and expand representation for the State Gang Strike Force.
- Increasing the 911-surcharge to provide adequate funding to all public safety answering points in Minnesota.

Minneapolis Supports:

- Amendments to the data practices act to allow for more sharing of mental health data.
- The use of "photo cops" to monitor and cite red light traffic offenses.
- Legislation requiring certain multi-line phone systems and operators to provide more precise caller information to 911 centers.

- Amendments to the Personal Protection Act to allow municipalities to post signs prohibiting handguns in the same manner businesses are currently allowed.

Municipal Government

Minneapolis' ability to conduct business in an orderly and efficient manner is frequently regulated by State law.

Minneapolis supports:

- Legislation allowing the City to utilize existing state law relating to storm water utility charges.
- Local authority to extend benefits to domestic partners.
- Changes in the legal notification law allowing the Internet to be used more frequently to notify citizens about public actions.
- Including gas-fitting competency in the current State plumbing examination.
- Altering of the full-funding date for pension funds.
- Altering MN Statute 118.07 so that the City would be able to exercise the same authority in terms of investment options already in use by Hennepin County.

Minneapolis opposes:

- State ordered city council elections before regularly scheduled election.
- Changes in the composition of the Metropolitan Sports Facilities Commission without a commensurate change in the funding formula.

City Livability

The City works to keep Minneapolis a desirable place to live, work, conduct business and play.

Minneapolis supports:

- Legislation fully addressing the effect that airport noise has on surrounding neighborhoods, including a fully funded noise mitigation program.
- Maintaining funds for the grant program to reduce and eliminate health disparities in targeted health categories.
- Legislation that holds managed care plans and health care providers accountable for lead screening for children on medical assistance; and increasing state funding for lead control activities.
- Legislation that creates a tax credit for owners of older houses seeking to resolve lead contamination issues in their homes.
- Sustaining the minor consent law permitting adolescents to see medical providers for reproductive, mental health and chemical dependency issues without informing a parent or guardian.
- Protect the funding for safety net programs.
- Restore or maintain the funding for early childhood programs.
- Restore funding for youth development programs.
- Improve dental health care for children and low-income adults.

- Maintaining a comprehensive sexuality curriculum.
- Ensuring efficient public health emergency preparedness and response.
- Legislation to prohibit the possession/ownership of certain exotic animals (primates, big cats and bears) within the city.

Minneapolis opposes:

- Legislation allowing the purchase of wine in grocery stores or other changes making it easier for minors to purchase alcoholic beverages.

Jobs & Economic Development

Often, the first barriers to be overcome in creating jobs and providing housing opportunities in older, built-up cities, are the costs of land recycling, which include remediation and redevelopment. Many of the programs listed below are a high priority for the city because they provide state assistance in financing the development of brownfields and elimination of blight and other tools to facilitate successful and sustainable redevelopment in our City.

Minneapolis supports:

- \$10 million in state bonding for the Redevelopment Account, administered by DEED, and restoration of statewide jurisdiction for the program.
- Safeguarding the Contamination Cleanup Grant Program, administered by DEED, from cuts designed to bring the state budget into balance.
- \$3 million in state bonding for the Livable Communities Infrastructure Fund, the counterpart to the Rural Economic Development Infrastructure Fund.
- Statewide TIF legislation to facilitate the redevelopment of large urban renewal projects.
- Initiate special TIF legislation to facilitate the redevelopment of the University Research Corridor.
- \$2 million in state bonding for the County and Local Preservation Grant Program administered by the Minnesota Historical Society, contingent upon the Agency's willingness to lift the \$75,000 cap on grants from that program. Continue laying the groundwork for a state tax credit program to support the preservation of historic property.
- Oppose the expansion of TIF for purposes that would conflict with the use of this tool for housing, redevelopment and the cleanup of contaminated lands or otherwise unfairly disadvantage the City of Minneapolis.